4911 Aurora Drive
Kensington, Maryland 20895
933-6251
June 6, 1987

Mr. Joe Davidson
The Wall Street Journal
1025 Conneticut Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Joe:

Enclosed is the material on Oxford House I said I would mail when we talked on the telephone June 2. The thick, wordy booklet is something we wrote when we were a new organization to give ourselves some structure. The article with the photo is the only one ever written about us. It was published in a HEW newsletter for professionals in 1977. The photo shows a typical Oxford House, this one in upper northwest Washington near Chevy Chase Circle. It is still an Oxford House with 14 residents.

I think the Oxford House story has some national scope, especially with the current emphasis on the homeless.

There isn't enough money in the world to house and furnish a recovery program for everybody who needs one if the government has to pay the bill. Oxford House offers an alternative. Oxford House offers a recovering alcoholic who wants to help himself a stable environment in which to get sober and resocialized while AA works its wonder. The peer pressure is to recover rather than to get worse. In 11 years we've proven it works for all ages, all races, all economic backgrounds. We've never gotten a nickle from outside sources. Each house has a bank account to pay its bills. The umbrella corporation has never had a bank account.

It seems to me that politicians and social agencies would have a great deal of interest in a program that works and is self-supporting. There is no reason why the concept can't work outside Washington. It would also work for others with a need for special housing.

In recent years the field of alcoholism has become highly professional, with a lot of corporations opening expensive rehabilitation centers and requiring well-paid counselors, social workers and psychiatrists to staff them. That's fine for those with jobs and insurance and those with a lot of money. They never lacked for options anyway. Unfortunately, since the big influx of federal money into the alcoholism area in the 1970s, many of the grassroots organizations that were serving the poor joined the health care industry. Some say there are fewer places for

someone without money to go than 20 years ago. Now the federal government is trimming back some of those funds.

The State of California has reversed the trend by lowering the credentials needed to work in a state-supported recovery home. Faced with budget cuts, other jurisdictions may follow.

I know there is some interest in self-supporting recovery homes on the East Coast. I gave a talk on Oxford House to a gathering at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse late last year.

Self support is obviously not a new idea. We just built a little structure to allow it to happen. Anybody can do the same thing. Some guidance and talking with others who have been successful would obviously be helpful for others. An article in the Wall Street Journal might set that in motion.

Sincerely,

John

John V. O'Neill